

Washington Merry-go-round

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WASHINGTON — With an advertising barrage aimed at every home in the country, the Kellogg cereal people are spreading the word that sugar-coated breakfast foods are highly nutritional and don't contribute to tooth decay.

At our request, the Federal Trade Commission has compiled evidence that demolishes most of the company's major advertising claims. The data, though not yet adopted in final official form, raises authoritative challenges to the theme of Kellogg's lavish new advertising campaign.

The ads contend, for instance, that "ready-to-eat cereals do not increase tooth decay in children." The commission cites a study of animals to the contrary. This shows that a heavy diet of pre-sugared food, even when washed down with milk, causes tooth decay.

Kellogg assures the public that sugared cereals are nutritious. In the study furnished us by the federal agency, Dr. Jean Mayer, the renowned diet authority, protests that even when fortified, "the total effect is one of inadequate nutrition."

The adverse evidence, according to federal experts, applies to similar claims by General Mills, Quaker Oats and other cereal firms. In fairness to Quaker Oats, it should be noted that they have welcomed an FTC probe of cereal ads directed at the nation's children.

Kellogg has come up with three studies purporting to support the nutritional benefits of sugared foods. But ex-

perts have found them based on "allegedly inadequate methodology" and "allegedly insufficient evidence," according to documentation provided us.

Of the potential dental problems involved for child consumers, the commission declares: "Frequent nibbling between meals on small amounts of highly sugared cereals might contribute significantly to tooth decay."

In disputing the Kellogg nutrition sweet sell, the study also states: "Sugar contributes nothing to human nutrition besides calories — no vitamins, no minerals, no proteins ... A calorie of sugar contains no more energy than a calorie of anything else."

The commission found an array of misleading misstatements and downright errors advanced by Kellogg's ad men.

—The company claims there is no more sugar in an ounce of ready-sweetened cereal than in an apple, banana or glass of orange juice. This statement is based on cereal containing 30.8 percent sugar. Not only do many other cereals contain far more sugar, but the refined cereal in a breakfast food can cause more cavities than the natural sugar in fruits, according to the experts.

—Kellogg has ballyhooed the misleading statement that "sugar consumption in the U.S. has remained unchanged for the last 50 years." Government analysts found the company's own

charts show sugar consumption shooting up 13 percent since 1960, with the consumption among youngsters perhaps even higher.

—Kellogg's own figures are contradictory. In one document, for example, Kellogg claims only eight percent of its sugared cereals are eaten directly from the box without milk. In their new ads, the company gives the figure as an even lower six percent.

OSWALD FILE: The Pentagon may have thrown away files showing Army intelligence agents were ahead of almost everyone else in establishing the background of Lee Harvey Oswald as the killer of John F. Kennedy.

We recently told how the Defense Department had "deep-sixed" some of the records on the hectic events at Dallas even though Justice had ordered everything kept. Since then, FBI files have yielded up some clues to what the destroyed material may have contained.

The FBI records show the Army's 112th Army Intelligence Group at San Antonio was alertly supplying solid leads to Oswald's turbulent past within two hours after Oswald's arrest. Intelligence agent Lt. Col. Robert E. Jones was on the phone informing the FBI of Oswald's desertion to the Soviet Union, his marriage to a Russian woman and his pro-Castro Cuban activities in New Orleans.

All the Army had to go on in that short

time was the fact that an identification card in Oswald's wallet when he was captured bore the fictitious name "Alex Hidell." Jones and other intelligence agents swiftly connected this with an "A. J. Hidell" known to have distributed pro-Castro pamphlets in New Orleans.

From there, the links were made to Oswald through the FBI and the Army's files. In the wake of the destruction of the Pentagon files, the Army intelligence agents on that day may never get full credit for their work.

ENERGETIC NO: Energy czar James Schlesinger and other Department of Energy officials have been forced by an environmental group to pull the rug out from under a seminar that could have turned a fat profit for a private newsletter.

Energy Daily had advertised that Schlesinger and others in and out of government would be featured speakers at the conference for "executives in the energy industries." The entrance fee to this get-together was \$250 a head. Schlesinger and his subordinate officials would speak for free.

The Natural Resources Defense Council protested that \$250 wasn't much to pay for a corporation bigwig on an expense account but it was out of reach for environmentalists on their limited budgets. Schlesinger ruled out any free speeches by himself and other Energy Department officials. Energy Daily quickly canceled the seminar.